Version 1.3

Employment Tax e-file System

94x XML Assurance Testing Process for 2003

Congratulations, you've passed assurance testing!!

04/25/2003
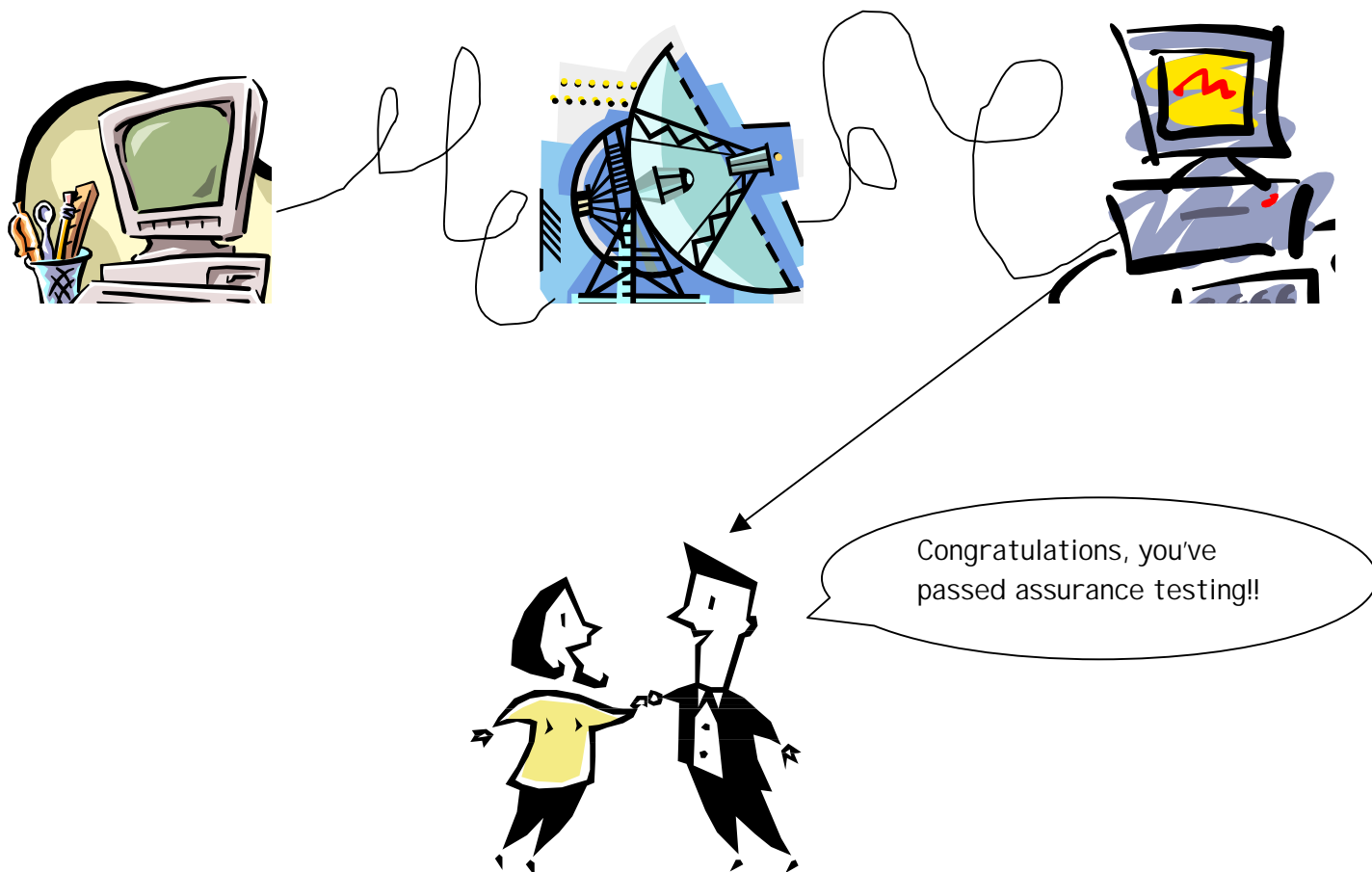
94x XML Assurance Testing Process

Software Developers, Reporting Agents and Transmitters (herein referred to as Trading Partners (TP)) should utilize the 94x XML Developers' Forum website to view the most current information on the 94x XML project, to include the latest schemas, test scenarios, and Publication 3823 (Users Guide). The website is located at: http://www.irs.gov/taxpros/providers/article/0,,id=97753,00.html.

Assurance testing is two fold: for PIN registration and return filing. The test scenarios provided on the above website are optional for TPs to use. Along with the raw test data, there are also completed returns showing the correct tax computation for each test scenario. *NOTE*: TPs can use these scenarios or create their own, (see the 'Pass/Fail Criteria' below).

1)   TPs must contact the Austin Help Desk (512-416-7750, fax #512-460-8962)) and submit a 9041 application to obtain ETINs (electronic transmitter identification number). TPs can receive 2 ETINs, one for testing and one for live filing, along with test passwords and test PINs; this information is used for identification purposes in the Customer Data Base (CDB). This is done by submitting a new or updated Form 9041, application to e-file Business returns.

- Reporting Agents are also required to send the following with their Form 9041 to Austin: A Reporting Agent's List containing the business names and EINs of the taxpayers for whom they will be filing returns and a Form 8655 for each taxpayer on the agent's list. Austin will forward the list and Forms 8655 to the Ogden Submission Processing Center.

- TPs must also obtain an EFIN (electronic filer identification number) for live return filing by submitting a Form 8633 through the Andover Submission Processing Center (call 1-800-691-1894 for instructions).

2)   If the TP will be providing service to online filers, they must then transmit a PIN registration in the XML format to the Austin Help Desk. Once a successful transmission for a PIN registration is received, the Help Desk will change the TP's status to "permanent approval", which indicates their XML transmission was accepted without system problems. The Help Desk then issues a letter to the TP and provides them with a live password. The TP must return the signed "Statement of Receipt" to Austin. Austin will then change the TP's status to "activated". At this point, the TP can transmit other PIN registrations in the XML format on behalf of their business taxpayers. However, these TPs will still need to test return data by contacting the Cincinnati Help Desk (see steps below).

3)   The TP will then conduct assurance testing using return data. They first conduct a pre-validation of the XML data in their test scenarios by using a parser, such as XML SPY, and run it against the most current XML schemas (currently Version 2.1). This will help to identify most validation errors prior to sending their transmission files to the IRS. A few validations that relate to confidential taxpayer data, such as EIN, ETIN, EFIN etc, can only be validated by the production system when sending in live returns and are not validated in the test environment.

4)   TPs should then test each return type in the 940/941 family that they intend to file live once they pass assurance testing. For testing purposes, we are asking that TPs use the following dummy EIN numbers and submit those return types in their transmission file that are applicable. This will allow for a more controlled verification and approval process for each return type with the IRS field office/Help Desk. The following are the test EIN numbers for each return type:

Return Type	EIN #	Return Type	EIN #
941	111111111	940	777777777
941 w/ Sched B	222222222	940 PR	888888888
w/ 941 C	333333333	w/Payment Record	999999999
941 PR	444444444		
w/ 941 C PR	555555555		
941 SS	666666666		

5) The TP will call the IRS Help Desk e-file Tax Examiners (TEs) in Cincinnati to state that they are ready to test (859-669-5621). The Help Desk *e-file* TE will then ensure their status is reflected as "Testing" on the CDB.

6) The TP will then transmit their test return files through EMS at the Tennessee Computing Center (TCC) once they have corrected all of their errors from the pre-validation test. Test ETINS will be used, production ETINS are only used in transmitting live data.

7) Once the test return files have been processed through EMS and the 94x XML system, the IRS will create and send an XML acknowledgement file (ACK file) that the TPs will pick up when they login to the EMS system.

8) If all returns within the transmission are not accepted, then the TPs will make the changes noted in the ACK file to correct the errors. They will then re-run the new file through the schema and XML parser, and retransmit their corrected test return file to TCC. (Steps 5-7 will be repeated)

9) If all returns are accepted with zero reject errors and the TP can read their ACK file, then the Cincinnati Help Desk *e-file* examiner will advise the TP that their software is approved and can be marketed. Tax Examiners work with TPs to provide direction throughout the testing process.

10) The Cincinnati Help Desk *e-file* examiner will fax the Service Center Acceptance Form to Austin. Austin will update the status for the return type that they are testing from "Testing" to "Permanently Approved". Once in Permanent Approval status, an acceptance letter is issued to the TP. The TP must return the signed "Statement of Receipt" to Austin. Austin will then update the filer to status of "Activated".

11) If the TP wants to continue testing with their own test data, they may continue to test using their test ETIN.

Notes:

- If a TP does not use their test ETIN for one year, the CDB will automatically drop them. They must then contact the Help Desk for a new test ETIN if they wish to resume testing.
- A TP on the CDB will only reach approved permanent status once they have passed assurance testing. If the TP is a software developer and transmitter, they will have two ETIN numbers, one for testing their software and the other for transmitting live return data.

Pass/Fail Criteria

FOR PIN REGISTRATION:

1. Trading Partners (TP) must submit a new or updated Form 9041 to the Austin Help Desk. In section 2 of the application form, the TP must check the blank Form box and then write in "94x XML" for return type. On line 4d, the TP should also write in 'XML'.
2. The TP must then successfully transmit a PIN registration in the XML format to the Austin Help Desk. *

FOR RETURN PROCESSING:

1. Successfully connect to the EMS system when initiating the transmission of a test file.
2. Successfully transmit the following employment tax return types: 941, 941 Schedule B, 941 PR, 941 C PR, 941 SS, 941 C, 940, 940 PR, Payment record, and PIN registration*.
    a. If the TP is not planning to submit/file certain return types in a production mode, they are exempt from testing them.
3. Successfully connect to the EMS system and retrieve their Acknowledgement file.
4. Once they have successfully completed the steps above, they will have passed assurance testing. After receiving their live password (and PIN if a Reporting Agent) and returning the signed "Statement of Receipt" to Austin, they will now be allowed to transmit live return data in a production mode.

* Successfully is defined as not receiving any error rejects from any IRS processing system.

Service Center Acceptance Form
94x XML

The following Applicant has passed Assurance Testing for the 94x XML system.

Name:_____

Date:_____   **EFIN**:_____   **ETIN**:_____

This Applicant has passed Assurance Testing for the following return types:

_____941   _____941 SS   _____941 C   _____940

_____941 PR   _____941 Schedule B _____941 C PR   _____940 PR

_____Payment Record _____PIN Registration

Comments or software limitations:

_____

_____

Name of Software Package**:** _____

Software Package ID Number and/or Version Number_____

Contact Person	Service Center	Phone
Grace Bay	Cincinnati	(859) 669-2769
Denise Stephens	Tennessee	(901) 546-3196
Delcie Miller	Austin	(512) 460-8943
John Myett	National Office	(202) 283-5448
Jeanie Yancey	National Office	(202) 283-0259